

- Inflation in BC falls to 2.3% in October
- Retail sales in the province drop 0.3% in September
- Third quarter farm cash receipts were up 9.3% over the same quarter last year

Prices

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate inched down to 2.3% in October.** Consumers continued to pay more for energy (+11.6%) than in the same month last year. British Columbians still paid more (+18.3%) at the pumps and the costs for fuel oil (+35.9%) and piped gas (+16.1%) remained substantially higher than October 2004. Excluding energy products, BC's inflation rate would have been 1.5%.

Although energy prices remained significantly higher than in October 2004, prices were noticeably lower than in September of this year. This moderation occurred after fuel prices skyrocketed in September in the wake of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Transportation costs rose 5.4% in the province from October last year, due not only to a continued increase in the cost of operating automotive vehicles (+7.4%) but also as public transportation (+2.8%) and inter-city transport (+1.9%) prices continued to climb. However, vehicle owners did pay less for car insurance (-0.9%).

Shelter costs were up 2.5% in the province mostly as a result of homeowners paying 2.8% more for their accommodation, while renters faced a slighter increase of 0.3%. Consumers also paid more (+1.6%) for food (especially restaurant meals, +3.3%), alcohol (+1.2%), tobacco (+1.6%) and health & personal care products & services (+1.9%). The cost of purchasing clothing & footwear saw a noticeable decrease (-2.4%) mainly the result of a drop in prices for both women's (-3.7%) and men's (-3.7%) clothing. The cost of operating and furnishing a household increased 1.6%, while recreation,

education & reading materials cost a modest 0.8% more than in October 2004.

Vancouver's inflation rate was 1.9% in October and Victoria's was 2.5%. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Canada's inflation rate was 2.6% in September.** Among the provinces, BC (+2.3%), Quebec (+2.3%), Newfoundland (+2.1%) and Saskatchewan (+1.9%) faced the smallest increases in overall price levels. The drop in the price of gasoline was the main factor in the slow-down in the 12-month change of the CPI across the nation. Gasoline prices were 17.0% higher than they were in October of last year.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Economy

- **Sales by retailers in the province fell 0.3% (seasonally adjusted) in September after three consecutive months of growth.** With the exception of a slight gain in New Brunswick (+0.3%), retailers in all provinces posted lower sales. Newfoundland (-2.5%) saw the largest drop, while Ontario (-1.2%), Alberta (-0.8%) and Quebec (-0.3%) also recorded a decline in sales.

Lower demand for motor vehicles drove retail sales down nationally in September (-0.9%), following a 0.5% drop in August. Despite dealers' continued offerings of consumer incentives such as employee pricing programs, sales of new cars plummeted (-10.8%). Consumers continued to pay higher prices at the pump in September bringing sales at gasoline stations up 4.4%. Sales were also up in all other retail sectors. Clothing & accessories (+2.6%) recorded the most notable sales boost in the country with pharmacies & personal care stores (+2.4%) and general merchandise stores (+1.6%) also enjoying significant increases. Excluding automotive sales, the nation would have experienced a 1.7% increase in total retail sales.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Did you know...

69% of Greater Vancouver residents say transit issues should be of high priority

Source: IPSOS REID poll July 2004

Agriculture

- **Cash receipts from farming operations in the province were up 9.3% (unadjusted) in the third quarter over the same quarter last year.** The improvement in cash receipts was largely due to revenues from sales of turkeys, which advanced 351.0% over the same quarter of 2004, while hens & chickens (+57.5%) continued to recover from last year's avian flu scare. Though cattle sales were up 40.5%, dairy product receipts remained flat (+0.6%). Crop receipts were down 0.7%.

Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

Youth and Labour

- **The proportion of employed BC youth (aged 15-24) was 55% in 2004, according to a new study of young people and the labour market.** Newfoundland (43%) recorded the lowest proportion of young workers. The Prairie provinces of Alberta (66%), Manitoba (63%) and Saskatchewan (61%) had the highest proportions of youth with jobs and the largest shares of young men working in goods-producing & transportation and warehousing—industries that generally employ more men than women.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Young Offenders

- **According to a new study of 59,000 young people, most (55%) young offenders who have contact with Canada's youth courts and adult criminal courts are one-time offenders.** The 16% of young offenders classified as *chronic offenders* (defined as persons referred to court in relation to five or more criminal incidents) make up almost 60% of all court referrals. The study followed the criminal history of young people from the time they turned 12 in 1991/92 to the time they were 21 in 2001/02.

Data Source: Statistics Canada Cat. No. 85-561-MIE2005006

Criminal Victimization

- **BC's rate of self-reported household victimizations—which includes break & enter, motor vehicle theft, theft of household property and vandalism—was among the highest in the country in 2004 (376 per 1,000 households).** Compared to the national average (248), rates were highest in the Western provinces, with Manitoba (403 per 1,000 households) and Sas-

katchewan (406) recording the highest numbers of reported incidents, and Newfoundland (127) and Quebec (147) the lowest. BC fared a bit better with respect to self-reported violent victimization—which includes sexual assault, robbery and physical assault—with 108 reports per 1,000 households, just above the national average (106). Alberta (160) and Nova Scotia (157) had the highest rates of violent victimization whereas Quebec (59) had the lowest. The survey also revealed an overall decline in the reporting of incidents in Canada. In 1999, 37% of all incidents were reported to police and by 2004 this had slipped to 34%.

Data Source: Statistics Canada Cat. # 85-002-XIE, Vol.25, No.7

Large urban transit

- **Canadians are taking more trips on urban transit systems.** Combined ridership on ten large urban transit systems (accounting for 80% of total urban transit in Canada) was up 3.6% in September over the same month last year. About 121.7 million passenger trips were taken on these systems, generating \$190.2 million in revenue, a 6.1% increase over September 2004.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Nation

- **Corporations in Canada earned record high operating profits of \$55.0 billion (seasonally adjusted) in the third quarter of 2005, an increase of 2.9% over the second quarter.** Soaring oil and gas prices caused a swell (+16.6%) in profits for oil & gas extraction companies. Wholesalers (+11.4%) and retailers (+4.8%) also gained ground in the third quarter, whereas manufacturing profits edged down (-1.2%) for the fourth time over the past five quarters. Financial corporations also experienced a decline as they saw operating profits retreat (-6.1%) to \$5.4 billion in the third quarter.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Infoline Issue: 05-47
November 25, 2005

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Originally published in *Immigration Highlights* Issue 05-2. Annual Subscription \$30 +GST

Education Level of Recent Immigrants

The overall education levels of recent immigrants have improved significantly over the last two decades. One of the reasons for this trend was the increasing proportion of immigrants admitted under the skilled worker classes, as in these classes immigrants are selected under a points system where education qualification is the most important criterion. Another reason is that education levels have been improving globally, especially in the developing countries, where a majority of recent Canadian immigrants originate.

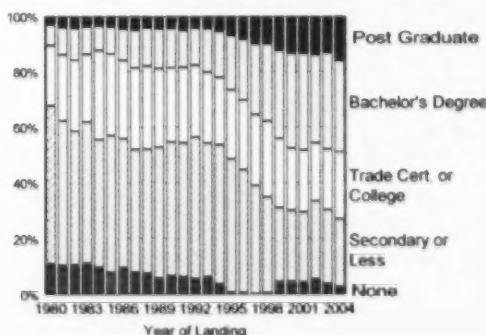
Over the last 25 years, the number of immigrants, at the time of their arrival, who possessed some post-secondary education has been increasing, while those who only had secondary or less education has been declining. The percentage of B.C. immigrants aged 20 and older who possessed no education qualification at arrival has declined from 11 per cent in 1980 to less than 5 per cent in the last few years. On the other hand, the percentage that possessed a university education has increased from 17 per cent in 1980 to more than 50 per cent in recent years. The proportion of immigrants who had a trade school certificate or post-

secondary training from a non-university institution has remained relatively constant over the period. Similar trends are also observed in other provinces.

Female immigrants to B.C. tended to have lower education levels than their male counterparts. There were proportionally more female immigrants who arrived with no education or with below high school levels. Also, more male than female immigrants had a university education. However, there were relatively more female immigrants with a trade school or non-university post-secondary education.

There are significant variations in the education levels when comparing immigrants coming from different countries. The top 20 sources of immigrants to B.C. during the five-year period 2000-2004 accounted for about 84 per cent of all landings in the province. Amongst these top sources, immigrants from Russian and Ukraine were more likely to possess a post-secondary education while those from Fiji, Vietnam and Hong Kong were more likely to have only a secondary or lower education.

B.C. Immigrants Aged 20+ by Education Levels

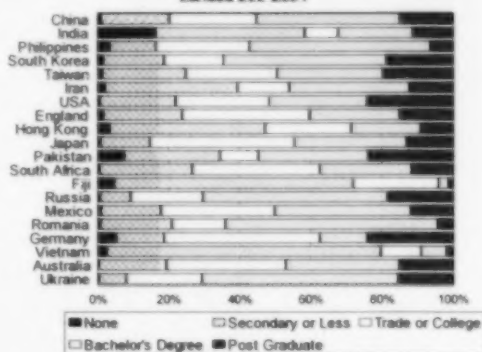


Infoline Report:

immigrants and education... page 2

As mentioned earlier, independent skilled-worker immigrants tend to have higher education qualifications over other classes of immigrants due to the points system. Hence, source countries that have higher concentration of skilled-worker immigrants tended to show higher overall education qualifications. Data show that business immigrants are the next most highly educated group, followed by family immigrants. Refugee immigrants tended to possess, at the time of landing, the lowest education levels among all immigrants. During the 2000-2004 period, the proportion who possessed higher than secondary education was 93.3 per cent for skilled-worker immigrants, 48.2 per cent for business immigrants, 52.0 per cent for family immigrants, and 37.7 per cent for refugees.

B.C. Immigrants By Top 20 Sources By Education
Landed 2000-2004





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also on the Internet at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)		% change on one year ago
	Jul 1/05	
BC	4,254.5	1.3
Canada	32,270.5	0.9
GDP and INCOME		% change on one year ago
(BC - at market prices)	2004	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$ millions)	157,241	7.7
GDP (\$ 1997 millions)	139,205	4.0
GDP (\$ 1997 per Capita)	33,129	2.8
Personal Disposable Income (\$ 1997 per Capita)	20,182	1.4
TRADE (\$ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Sep	3,535	-0.5
Merchandise Exports - Sep	3,075	1.6
Retail Sales - Sep	4,281	-0.3
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		12-month avg % change
(all items - 1992=100)	Oct '05	
BC	126.3	2.0
Canada	128.5	2.3
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on prev. month
(seasonally adjusted)	Oct '05	
Labour Force - BC	2,265	0.1
Employed - BC	2,149	0.7
Unemployed - BC	116	-9.5
	Sep '05	
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	5.1	5.7
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	6.6	6.7
INTEREST RATES (percent)		Nov 24/04
	Nov 23/05	
Prime Business Rate	4.75	4.25
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	5.40	5.00
- 5 year	6.15	6.30
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE		Nov 24/04
	Nov 23/05	
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn \$	1.1719	1.1814
US \$ (reciprocal of the closing rate)	0.8532	0.8472
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on one year ago
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Oct '05	
BC	705.83	0.2
Canada	711.14	4.1

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, } Statistics
 Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Canada
 Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics
 For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Updated results

Electoral District Profiles

Our 18-page profile of each electoral district contains a brief listing of election results in the riding. This section is now based on the official results of the May 17, 2005 provincial election as published by Elections BC.

Provincial Electoral District Profiles, 2001

[http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/\[continued\]data/cen01/profiles/csd_txt.asp#PED_mark](http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/[continued]data/cen01/profiles/csd_txt.asp#PED_mark)

On our site

Small Business Profile

This annual publication provides a profile of BC's small businesses, including number of businesses, employment and GDP.

Small Business Profile 2005

[http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/\[continued\]data/bus_stat/busind/sm_bus/SBP2005.pdf](http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/[continued]data/bus_stat/busind/sm_bus/SBP2005.pdf)

Released this week by BC STATS

- Consumer Price Index, October 2005
- Current Statistics, November 2005

Next week

- Business Indicators, November 2005

